

## A2 Curriculum Study

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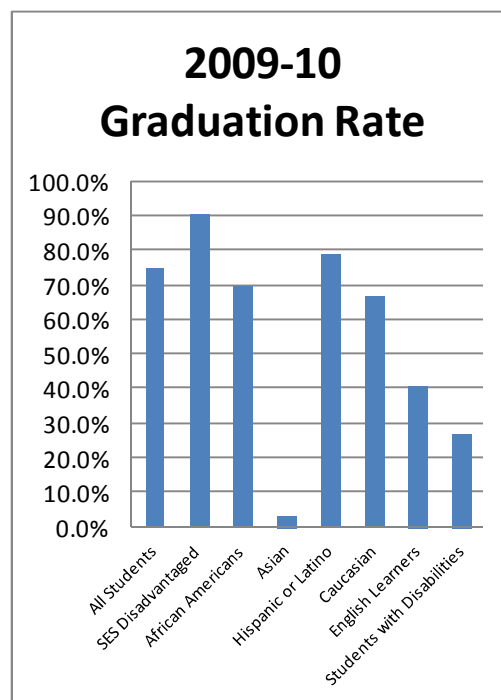
### **CURRICULUM STUDY – Frank R. Walkup Library John Muir High School**

**Study Goal** - To understand the major topical areas and curriculum needs to be served by the collection.

**Objective** – To develop and present a comprehensive view of the current and future needs of the library collection for the development of a Collection Development Policies and Plan to meet the curriculum goals.

**What major curricular initiatives, either old or new, will require information-rich or technological-rich environments?**

John Muir High School is a comprehensive four-year program with a curriculum designed to prepare students for college by fulfilling the A-G college entrance requirements of the University of California or California State University systems colleges. Due to sanctions imposed by the State of California for poor academic performance, John Muir High School is experiencing some major important changes in curriculum. The school was reorganized into academic academies or pathways: Arts, Media and Entertainment (AEM), Business and Entrepreneurship (BE), and Engineering and Environmental Science (EES). Each Academy was designed using specific curricular requirements of ConnectEd, the Career Pathways Consulting Firm and must be evaluated by them for the coursework to be accredited for use as college credits. The school mission and vision statements were revised and the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs) were created to focus curriculum and school culture issues. . The schedule was changed to an eight-period block schedule to accommodate weekly teacher collaboration both in their core subject departments and their Academies. As part of this collaboration process, extensive professional development is provided to accelerate the changes required by the school's Single Plan for Student Achievement goals and the development of the 2010-2011WASC Action Plan. This process was called the Reinvention of Muir



## Curriculum Goals –

The principal's letter to the new faculty and staff joining John Muir High School's learning community this year, welcomed them with some of the school's successes from last year. They joined the returning staff in celebrating several important achievements.

- *JMHS has met its API for 2011 with growth of 17 points. Since the Reinvention in 2008, JMHS has increased its API by 55 points.*
- *Our CAHSEE resulted in a 7% increase in our 10th grade passing rate from the previous year.*
- *JMHS has received a formal three (3) year accreditation from the WASC.*
- *The JMHS drop-out rate decreased from 35% to 9.7% for the 2011 senior class.*
- *College attendance is on the rise and {one of our students} received the Gates Millennium Scholarship and will attend UC Berkeley this fall.*
- *JMHS won 1st place in the Solar Cup Regional Competition!!!*

Each of these accomplishments can be directly correlated with a curriculum focus or initiative currently in place.

The ESLRs specifically state that “upon graduation, students at JMHS will master academic standards to be successful in any competitive university and career pathway, utilize technology effectively and efficiently to organize and communicate information for academic, professional and personal use, identify, develop and evaluate solutions to problems through critical thinking to improve the learning community, and realize that anything is possible for the determined and motivated individual who strives to be a lifelong learner.

The Academic Pathways curricular goals include a rigorous college preparatory curriculum including specialized programs such as the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) pre-engineering curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on cross-curricular projects. These projects involve collaboration between teachers and core subject departments to create semester-long work-based learning and project-based learning.

There are planned improvement goals for meeting the API & AYP scores for all students. Specific goals are identified in the SAP to increase the percentage of students in all identified subgroups who score proficient and above in academic achievement on the CST English Language Arts and Math assessments. Additional goals include increasing the number of students who pass the CAHSEE and who fulfill the UC A-G requirements and graduate on time.

Other undocumented goals include increasing the Advanced Placement course offerings and student success in those courses, on campus and in partnership with Pasadena City College.

These curricular initiatives have created both an opportunity and a need for information-rich or technologically rich environments. The library is the most effective department to be responsible for providing reusable resources online and in print to support the new and constantly changing co-curriculum.

**What are the major subjects and disciplines taught in this school?  
Which of these major subjects would benefit from an information-rich environment?**

Although there is evidence that an information-rich environment would benefit every course, English, Science and History have specific prioritized needs outlined in the state and district content standards, the district curriculum maps and pacing guides, the SAP/SPSA for 2010-2011 (SAP) and the syllabus for each individual class. Every student in the school must take classes in these departments to graduate and enter college. In Figure 1: Course Offerings, the courses that would benefit from an information rich environment are *italicized*.

**Table 1: Course Offerings JMHS Fall 2011-2012**

<b><u>English</u></b> Composition 2 CaHSEE Preparation English 1 English 2 English 3 English 4 ELD English 1-4 English 1 Puente English 2 Puente AP English Language and Composition Journalism News	<b><u>Natural/Physical Science</u></b> Aerospace Science (ROTC) Biology 1 AP Biology Biotechnology Chemistry Physics	<b><u>Physical Education</u></b>  <b><u>Academies</u></b>  <b><u>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Media</u></b> Animation (ROP) Cartooning Art, Media & Design Graphic Design Film & Video Production 1 Film & Video Production 2 (ROP) Graphic Design (ROP) Jazz Ensemble Musical Theatre Photography
<b><u>Social Science</u></b> American Government AP European History AP U.S. History Economics Government Fundamentals World History U.S. History	<b><u>Foreign Languages</u></b> Spanish 1, Spanish 2 Spanish 3 Spanish 4 AP Spanish Language Spanish for Native Speakers 2 Spanish for Native Speakers 3	<b><u>Business and Entrepreneurship</u></b> Economics & AP Principles of Finance
<b><u>Mathematics</u></b> Advanced Math Algebra Applications Algebra 1 Algebra 2 AP Calculus AB CaHSEE Math Geometry	<b><u>Visual/Performing/Fine Arts</u></b> Advanced Chorus Advanced Ceramics AP Art History AP Studio Art: 2-D Design Art Band / Orchestra Ceramics Choir/Chorus Drama Drawing and Painting Music Appreciation Studio Art Vocal Ensemble Wind Ensemble	<b><u>Engineering and Environmental Science</u></b> AP Environmental Science Building and Construction Digital Electronics Intro to Engineering Design Principles of Engineering

The English Department requires an enormous amount of print materials in both fiction and nonfiction to meet their curricular needs. The majority of students on campus participate in the Renaissance Learning Accelerated Reader (AR) program to advance their reading skills. Since a large percentage of students enter JMHS with below grade level reading skills, the practice provided by AR is important. Each student is expected to read independently several books during the semester. These books need to be within

their zone of proximal development provided by AR. Supporting the students reading with enough titles within a reading level is a curricular need and a challenge. Students also read books as a member of a class or literature circle so multiple copies of particular titles need to be available.

The curricular requirements of Science are unique. They need an information-rich environment that stresses currency and accuracy not as evident in the other core subject areas. A print only collection is limited in its ability to meet these needs. Supplementary information via the Internet and online database subscriptions is better able to address them.

The History Department collaborates with the other core departments and with the academies to create a component of each academy project. They encourage students look into the past with a critical eye on the future. A strong print collection of circulating and non-circulating reference resources is important. Access to changing perspectives on historical events is also necessary. Those perspectives are more available in periodical subscriptions or non-print media including online databases.

The Academies represent another academic curricular community that requires an information-rich environment as well as a technology-rich environment. Students work in conjunction with community partners to effectively create work-based learning projects. These projects require up-to-date current information and resources to critically address issues and needs specific to their disciplines. They also focus on the careers involved and the current economic climates affecting those careers



John Muir High School has a wide range of intervention and after-school activities that occur outside of the regular classroom setting or school day. Many of these activities are supported by groups not part of the school faculty and staff. They support many of the curricular focuses on campus and have needs of their own. There is a strong sports programs emphasizing football, basketball, volleyball, cheer. Drama and Band also have very active student groups. They are several support programs for identified groups of students that include Mustangs on the Move, a community collaborative providing free academic assistance, Mentoring and Partnership for Youth Development (MPYD), a male mentoring program, and LINKS, a female mentoring program. Others include Teen Futures, D'Veal Family Services, and Young & Healthy. Some programs are incorporated into the school curriculum but also have extracurricular components. These include the College Access Plan (CAP), ROTC, ROP, AVID, and Puente. Special contests invite student participation such as the annual Solar Boat Cup competition sponsored by the Metropolitan Water District and the JPL Education Department's Invention Challenge. All of these groups and students would benefit from a strong information-rich environment. Currently many of these organizations do use library facilities and resources but there are many more opportunities to meet their information needs.

An information-rich environment is also valuable in the intervention classes offered such as the CaHSEE preparation classes. These classes share the need for alternative methods of instruction with the Special Education Department and the English Language Development departments. These departments need to adapt the lessons to meet specific student needs and frequently require information resources beyond the usual fare available. The individual students' needs are a primary focus.

**What major projects or topics (by grade level) should be on a checklist to guide collection building?**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Science</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Biography of a scientist who has made a major contribution to chemistry</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>History 8</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Advertising in America through the Decades</li> <li>➤ History of an invention</li> <li>➤ Industrial Revolution biography</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Mathematics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Business budgeting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>English</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Discovering the history of To Kill a Mockingbird</li> <li>➤ Accelerated Reader</li> <li>➤ Prohibition and the Great Gatsby</li> <li>➤ ERWC topics (i.e. Value of Life, Juvenile Justice)</li> <li>➤ "This I Believe" essay (Puente) (CAP)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Foreign Language</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Biographical sketch of an Hispanic role model</li> <li>➤ Read a novel in Spanish</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Academic Pathways (Academies)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Medallion requirements (all)</li> <li>➤ senior portfolio,(AEM)</li> <li>➤ internship (all)</li> <li>➤ senior project.(AEM)</li> <li>➤ College Research (AVID &amp; Counselors)</li> <li>➤ Reflections (PTSA)</li> <li>➤ Does my zip code determine my future? (AEM)</li> <li>➤ The Business of Your Life career research (BE)</li> <li>➤ Anticipating a Natural Disaster or Biological Terrorist Attack at the Rose Bowl (EES)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**What recreational needs do students have that should be supported by the library collection?**

Based on student requests, circulation statistics and random student Inventory of Attitudes and Interests, the following topics are necessary to meet student recreational needs. Many of these topics will also meet their Accelerated Reader needs if purchased in appropriate reading levels.

- ❖ Sports – both fiction and non-fiction. There is strong participation in this community is football, basketball, soccer and other team sports.
- ❖ Historical fiction – The male students are particularly interested in any story that is set during historical conflicts such as world wars or civil war battles.
- ❖ Urban topics - both fiction and nonfiction – Biographies of former gang members, romances that must survive socioeconomic challenges, non-fiction that discusses social issues relevant to this group of students.
- ❖ Current, popular, new titles – fiction and non-fiction, both in series and stand-alone. If reading is to remain a socially acceptable activity, having popular materials is a must. There is also a strong correlation between current movies and previously published books. If a movie tie-in is available, the book receives increased circulation.

### **What personal needs of students should be covered in the collection?**

Overall, the students this library serves read topics that are similar to their peers in any high school. They tend to read more classic literature because that is what they are exposed to in their English classes but making that literature approachable for students who read below grade level is important. High interest topics in middle grade reading levels meet both their recreational and personal reading needs. Many of them face serious personal challenges. Sometimes, socioeconomic issues, family dynamics and their own transition into adulthood can affect both their academic and personal growth. Gangs are an issue in the Altadena/Pasadena area and some of Muir's students are involved. Single parent families are common. Subjects that interest them include overcoming tragedies, the drug culture and self-help or success guides have value to them. Understanding interpersonal relationship is also a strong personal need that can be addressed through the library collection. In any genre, they are interested in reading about people and characters whose lives mirror their own.

### **Which teachers or groups of teachers will need information-rich or technologically-rich environments?**

Every teacher on the Muir campus is actively involved in the Academic Pathways and, as such, need information-rich or technologically-rich environments. They provide real-world examples for critical thinking and problem solving. They encourage their students to create products that require technology to produce. The core subject teachers in English, Math and History collaborate with the Career Technical Education (CTE) teachers to support Academy projects and individual student assignments. For example, the EES Academy uses computer-aided design software to create a product and the EES Academy's English teacher provides support in writing the report on product development and creating a digital presentation. The BE CTE teacher has students create a business plan including research on existing companies and the BE Academy's Math teacher supports the assignment with instruction in budgeting. They all require an information-rich and a technology-rich environment.

### **What kinds of professional resources are needed for faculty? for parents?**

All staff received a significant amount of professional development in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. As part of the Reinvention collaboration process, extensive professional development is provided in conjunction with the curricular initiatives that are currently in progress. The instructional strategies that have been introduced over the two years include EDI (Explicit Direct Instruction), Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and RtI (Response to Intervention). Each of these is highly dependent on In progress research. Current resources and case studies are necessary to effectively implement any of these strategies.

The following organizations receive support from the Muir Community Volunteer Center on campus. Many of the professional resources need for parents and parent volunteers are available for them. There are also resources available through several of the other non-profit groups actively support families of students on campus. Their needs

have not been addressed in the library collection although they do use the library facility regularly.

- Parent, Teacher and Student Association (PTSA)
- African American Parent Council (AAPC)
- English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC)
- School Site Council

### **Implications on Library Selection and Collection Development**

The implications for the teacher librarian at John Muir High School are daunting. This library will have to change its focus from literature-based support for the core subject departments of English and History to a comprehensive technology-based resource for current information in order to meet the needs of the curriculum focused on academy-based, real-world, work-based curriculum. It is the teacher librarian's responsibility to "collaborate with teachers, staff, and other members of the learning community to integrate information literacy competencies throughout the teaching and learning process (American Association of School Libraries, 61)." Collection development and selection of library materials are integral components to effectively address this responsibility and a curriculum analysis provides background information on what is required of the collection by all its users. When making the decision to analyze a library collection based on the users needs, knowing the library's goals and the academic goals are essential. "A collection assessment measures the extent to which the collection...meets the goals, needs, and mission of the library and its parent organization (Johnson, 291). Although support for the core curriculum is still important, supporting the ever-changing curriculum of the Academies needs to be addressed as well. The challenge will be to change the focus from that of a traditional library collection to a collection that includes more online resources and periodical subscriptions. Information available through technology is the most effective way to meet this challenge.

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